AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. *(Currently Amended)* A process for ~~the~~ vulcanization of a pneumatic tire comprising a tread portion, a pair of sidewall portions and a pair of bead portions ~~which comprises~~, comprising:

~~conducting the~~ venting ~~in a portion of a tire placed in~~ a gas in a vulcanization mold ~~prior to vulcanization and~~ received with an uncured product of the pneumatic tire at a position corresponding to the sidewall portion from a venting gap formed between two or more sub-rings of a side portion ring constituting the vulcanization mold in at least one ~~place~~ location of the side portion ring in a radial direction of the tire so as to extend over a full circumference of the ring.

2. *(Currently Amended)* A vulcanization mold for ~~the~~ a pneumatic tire comprising:

a tread ring comprised of plural segments reciprocatively displacing in a radial direction and contributing to shape a tread portion;[[,]]

a pair of side portion rings mainly contributing to shape a pair of sidewall portions, and each comprised of two or more sub-rings; and

a bead portion ring contributing to shape a bead portion,

in which a venting gap is arranged between the two or more sub-rings in at least one ~~place~~ location of the side portion ring in the radial direction so as to extend over a full circumference of the ring and pass through the ring from the inside toward the outside thereof.

3. *(Currently Amended)* A vulcanization mold according to claim 2, wherein the venting gap is disposed ~~in a position of forming~~ where a bead guard of the pneumatic tire is formed for preventing ~~the~~ rubbing ~~to~~ with a rim flange.

4. *(Original)* A vulcanization mold according to claim 2, wherein the venting gap is disposed in at least one of a position corresponding to a turnup end of a carcass ply in a shaped tire to be placed in the mold, a position corresponding to an outer end of a bead filler in a radial direction and a position corresponding to a neighborhood of a side edge of a tread portion.

5. *(Original)* A vulcanization mold according to claim 2, wherein the venting gap has a clearance of 10-30 μm.

6. *(Currently Amended)* A vulcanization mold according to claim 2, wherein a plurality of fine grooves introducing ~~the~~ gas in the mold into the venting gap in an inner part of the side portion ring are arranged at both inward and outward sides with respect to the venting gap in the radial direction.

7. *(Currently Amended)* A vulcanization mold according to claim 2, wherein ~~the venting gap is formed between~~ sub-rings are positioned inward and outward in the radial direction and integrally united with each other ~~to constitute the side portion ring~~.

8. *(Currently Amended)* A vulcanization mold according to claim 2, wherein the ~~venting gaps are formed among plural~~ sub-rings ~~placed~~ are positioned inward and outward in the radial direction ~~so as to constitute the side portion ring~~, and opposed surfaces of the ~~mutual~~ sub-rings are slant faces inclining with respect to the radial direction, and at least one ~~sub-ring among these~~ of the sub-rings is energized by a spring or the like so as to enlarge the venting gap.

9. *(Currently Amended)* A vulcanization mold according to claim 7, wherein a chamfered portion or a notched portion communicating with the venting gap is arranged in a surface of at least one ~~sub-ring among the adjoining sub-rings placed inward and outward in the radial direction~~ of the sub-rings contacting with the tire before the vulcanization.

10. *(Currently Amended)* A vulcanization mold according to claim 8, wherein a chamfered portion or a notched portion communicating with the venting gap is arranged in a surface of at least one ~~sub-ring among the adjoining sub-rings placed inward and outward in the radial direction~~ of the sub-rings contacting with the tire before the vulcanization.

11. *(New)* A process for vulcanization of a pneumatic tire comprising a tread portion, a pair of sidewall portions and a pair of bead portions using a vulcanization mold, comprising:

venting a gas in the vulcanization mold at a position corresponding to the sidewall portion in at least one location of the side portion ring in a radial direction of the tire,

wherein the venting gaps are formed among plural sub-rings placed inward and outward in the radial direction so as to constitute the side portion ring, and opposed surfaces of the mutual sub-rings are slant faces inclining with respect to the radial direction, and at least one sub-ring among these sub-rings is energized by a spring or the like so as to enlarge the venting gap.

12. *(New)* A vulcanization mold according to claim 11, wherein a chamfered portion or a notched portion communicating with the venting gap is arranged in a surface of at least one sub-ring among the adjoining sub-rings placed inward and outward in the radial direction contacting with the tire before the vulcanization.